

now." She sat up as if she expected a pistol-shot. "No, Miss Marrow, this one's mine."

"Ye'm!" said I.

"'Tisn't, it-it don't hurt anybody, Miss Marrow, and a body must have something."

"I suppose truth is like a lantern; if we don't carry one on a dark night, we want to go in the dark, that's all. It didn't take me a minute to see all I'd been blinding myself to; of all I'd Shivers' starved life. I remembered all I'd heard about old Nathan Shivers' cruelty to his daughters, and how Lindy had nobody after little Maggie went away, and how she had been sort of left out by people thinking her offish and queer; and I just said helplessly, 'Oh, you poor thing, you poor thing!' Lindy looked at me; then she slipped down into my arms, sobbing. By and by she told me pretty nearly everything, and I guessed the rest—all the loneliness and the fear of people, and how she got desperate grieving for little Maggie, and got the doll to dress that she might have something to think about. I didn't tell her to go work for a poor child, for I remembered that when mine died there wasn't a living child in the world could have filled the place. So that day she came out to try and talk to me, and I had misunderstood her, and had spoken so sharp to her that she got to thinking she didn't want to live any longer; and all the evening she was wondering if it would be a sin—if it would be a sin—Lindy sobbed, and I turned cold thinking what might happen through our blindness of heart, which is worse than blindness of eyes. Well, after a while, when she had gotten quiet, and was sitting holding my hand, and I wondering what to do with her, there came a rap at the door, and in walked Samuel."

"Now, I've always said that Samuel Marrow was a wonderful man, being such a good hand at not seeing what he had no call to see. I don't know how long he'd been outside the window, but you'd have thought it an evening party to have heard him."

"'Good evening, Miss Lindy; fine growin' weather,' he says. 'Not that you need it, Miss Lindy, being a pretty size for a woman. I stepped across because it looked so sociable, and to ask for a piece of your cheese. It's the best in town,' says Samuel, slapping his knee, as he sat down; 'ye's'n, the best.' You never would have thought he had plenty of cheese at home. Lindy flew around after knives and plates, and Samuel cut his cheese and talked on. 'My, my! There! I intended to stop and see how Timothy Callow's coming on. His mother's just died, and he's been sick. There's always been just that two, you know. My, my, what will Timothy do? He's the sort that must have a mother around; he's like a boy. Well, well!' Samuel thought it over and looked at his cheese. 'I guess Timothy will just turn in and die there by himself, one o' these nights.' I had to listen, for I hadn't heard of Timothy Callow being at the point of death."

"'It seems dreadful for him to be alone, and sick, and in trouble, too,' said Lindy pitifully; 'and only a boy, too. Can't anybody help him, Captain?'"

"'Well, now, he's something more'n a boy, Miss Lindy,' said Samuel. 'I remembered that Timothy was just one year younger than Samuel Marrow, but Samuel had lighted his pipe and had caught my eye over the bowl. 'Ye's'n, something more; but he's the easy sort, content with his books and his telescope and his mother. It's bad, bad. Timothy can't stay alone, not till he gets strong, again. If you had to let your rooms out, Miss Lindy I'd ask you to take him for a matter of a few weeks until he gets all right. But I s'pose he must go down to Granny Bloom's.'"

"'Oh, Cap'n, no!' said Lindy, getting red and clasp ing her hands; 'he musn't go down there.' Granny Bloom had two little smoky rooms that Timothy wouldn't have looked at. 'I was thinking,' said Lindy, 'that maybe I can take him, anyhow—if it would help him—being sick, and so young, too—'"

"'By gum!' shouted Samuel, catching the lamp up; 'what a head that little woman's got! Me worryin' about Timothy Callow, and she ettin' there figurin' it all out! Come on, Miss Lindy, show us the room. Mother, Timothy Callow's in luck this voyage, sure!'"

"He didn't give Lindy time to wink, before she was showing us her best bedroom, looking as pleased and bright as a child, while Samuel talked about her grand idea, and what a fine head she had for managing. Lindy got so interested that she looked made over, and when we left her she was planning what she'd give Timothy Callow to eat; for Samuel arranged to see Timothy in the morning and help him move. That night I said, 'Lindy's going to be real set back to-morrow, when Timothy arrives with his books and his telescope, and he as old as you are. I don't see what you mean, anyhow!'"

"'He used to be a boy all right,' said

Samuel. 'I'm not to blame for his grow-
ing up in 'up.

"The upshot was that the next evening, here came *Lindy flying* across just before supper time. Her cheeks were pink and she came, and, 'Miss' Marrow, he isn't a boy at all. I thought the Cap'n meant he was. And he's got books and books, and he's real learned, and—and hadn't you better come over to supper—'

"'No, indeed,' said I. 'You just feed him up, *Lindy*. That's the first thing a man wants.

"'And I won't have to talk much to him, will I, *Miss' Marrow*?' said she.

"'You can't say, conversing with a learned man is to listen to his talk,' said I. So she went back somewhat easier in her mind, and the next evening Samuel said:

"'I stopped over to see how *Timothy's* coming on.

"'What?' said I.

"'All right,' said Samuel. 'He's talking about comets with two tails and *Lindy's* listening with her eyes.

"'But *Lindy* isn't *Granny Bloom* said she's what will people say to this?'

"'You ought to have thought of that, old lady, when you sent *Timothy Callow* to board over at *Lindy's*,' said he. Now this was fairly outrageous, but a month he had stayed and about it wasn't worth to thinking I had done it. In that month *Lindy* got to be a new creature. She was always busy and happy, for having somebody to see to was natural. I've known women to love a husband just because he was good for them to see after somebody—only they didn't know it. One evening *Timothy Callow* came across. He had picked up a heap in the month and said he had never been so comfortable in his life.

"'I guess you'll be sorry to leave *Miss Lindy's*,' said Samuel, beginning to smoke steady, and I looked at him in surprise.

"'I'm not considering leaving,' said *Timothy*, stroking his beard, easy and content.

"'I don't blame you,' said Samuel to his pipe; 'the Lower hotel is a poor place, and *Granny Bloom*'s the worst in town. But all good things must have an end, as the hymn says considering leaving, captain,' said *Timothy*, looking way off like he was seeing stars. 'I've got some new calculations to make, and *Miss Lindy* doesn't mind having me around.'

"'Nonsense,' said Samuel. 'She's a born housekeeper. You say you're *Lindy* never married, and it would be a pity for you to go, *Timothy*. Still as she ain't married—though 't would be better if she was, a lonely woman's like a—'

"'I'm smoking his smoke up you,' said *Timothy*, looking perplexed.

"'I haven't thought of going,' said he; 'I'm fixed comfortable.' Samuel caught my eye steady over his pipe, as if to say, 'I'm tacking this boat,' and he said, 'I'm smoking his smoke up you.' 'Yes, 't would be a pity, but I guess you're right, as you say. *Lindy* ain't exactly *Granny Bloom* and there ain't any other boarders. I guess you're right, *Timothy*.'

"*Timothy Callow* looked real startled. He got up and walked up and down, pulling his beard in a way he had, then he took his hat up.

"'I see, captain, I see,' he says, and bolts.

"'Well, Samuel Marrow, what do you mean by upsetting things just as they're set,' said I, real put out. 'Now you've gone and put notions in his head.'

"'That that did you expect when you would let *Timothy* to board over to *Lindy's*?' said he.

"'The very next morning here came *Lindy* looking as worried as her old self. She had on a blue print and a ruffled apron, and I thought how much *Lindy* was a prettier she looked than she had before.

"'Mr. Callow's going,' she said, and her lips tremble; 'and he won't say why. He's been so much company. *Miss Marrow*, I'll be all alone again; when—when I—'

"'I told her to ask *Timothy* to step across that day, and see to the depth of a new well we were having dug. So 't afternoon *Timothy* came over, and after he had looked at the well with Samuel, he looked at his watch.

"'I said I must be going, for I'm moving,' he said.

"'Moving,' says Samuel's; 'why, what's that?' said I.

"'Nothing nothing at all, captain,' says *Timothy*, turning his hat round and round: 'I've only been thinking over what you said, and—and I've concluded you're right.'

"'I guess I see,' said Samuel, taking his pipe from his mouth, and looking like a week-old lamb.

"'Why—er—about *Miss Lindy* not being married—captain.'

"'Married!' says Samuel, staring. 'married?' says I. 'No'm, I guess *Lindy* Shivers ain't married—' he packed the tobacco in his pipe—'I'm sorry for ye, Callow, if that's the way of the wind.' *Lindy* 'll be no easy craft to land. But you brought it on yourself, when you said she was to be married, knowing her to be such a fine and interestin' woman!'

"*Timothy* got red and pulled his beard, and I was fairly scandalized.

"'No, no, captain,' he says; 'you're mistaken. I've never seen him come here to board. I understood that *Miss Lindy* was—er—rather an elderly person, who would be a mother to me, as it were. I—I have no other intentions, what's that?' said I.

"'I looked at Samuel Marrow, and seemed to begin to see daylight. But he was deaf as a post, packing his pipe.

"'Twouldn't hurt to ask her,' he says to his pipe: 'ask her, by all means, for if she'll say no, what's the matter if she says No'm I'm thinkin' she will! By all means, ask her!'

"'By this time *Timothy* was scarlet, and standing first on one foot and then on the other.

"'Wrong, wrong, captain,' he says, 'wrong, wrong—I I haven't any such intention, I assure you.' Samuel held his pipe out and came near, speaking slow.

"'You meant to say that you've been triflin' with *Lindy* Shivers all this time, and meanin' nothin', *Timothy Callow*? Is that it?'

"'No, no, indeed, captain,' says poor *Timothy*, at his wit's end. 'I assure you.

"'So that's it,' says Samuel, not listening to a word. 'You say you're more comfortable than ever you were in your life, and you can't stay and be comfortable without asking *Lindy*, and you're going away without askin' *Lindy*—' then split my rafters, split my rafters, *Samuel* of a sudden, 'split my rafters, you've got no more sense, *Sam-*

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